

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO†

BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA†

EXCERPTS FROM OUR STATE MEDICAL JOURNAL

Vol. XV, No. 2, February, 1917

EXCERPTS FROM EDITORIAL NOTES

The Medical Practice Act.—The present law regulating the practice of medicine divides all practitioners into two classes: "physicians and surgeons" and "drugless practitioners," and avoids any reference to sects or cults. It outlines very definitely the scope of practice for the two classes. Physicians and surgeons are authorized "to use drugs or what are known as medicinal preparations in or upon human beings, and to use any and all other methods in the treatment of diseases, injuries, deformities, or other physical or mental conditions." Drugless practitioners are authorized to practice "without the use of drugs or what are known as medicinal preparations, and without in any manner severing or penetrating any of the tissues of human beings except the severing of the umbilical cord." Reasonable educational requirements are demanded of applicants for either class of license, and they must also present diplomas from schools *approved by the Board*, and certificates of good moral character. This "approved by the Board" clause in the law is a most important feature, for it subjects all medical teaching institutions to frequent inspections by the Board, thus compelling them to do good work. Already several institutions, unable to meet the Board's demands for radical improvements, have "gone out of business." The value of this feature of the law cannot be over-estimated.

A Crying Need—A State Psychopathic Hospital.—At last it looks as if the people of the state of California have been aroused to the point of doing something big and sensible in the matter of removing the disgrace attending the methods of examination and commitment of the insane, and the prevention of mental diseases in general. The state has excellent hospitals for the insane which, unfortunately, are filled to overflowing, and nothing is being done, upon the broad scientific scale that the situation demands, to prevent insanity nor to inquire why California has so much more of it than other states. . . .

Now comes the California State Board of Health with a bill in the present state legislature asking for half a million dollars for the establishment of a psychopathic hospital as a part of the medical school of the University of California. . . . The State Board of Health has quietly, but systematically been studying this problem for over a year, and the California State Journal of Medicine feels that the establishment of a research psychopathic hospital, under the Board of Regents of the University of California, would go very far toward the solution of the problem.

The Legislature in Session.— . . . Several bills of vital interest to the medical profession are now under consideration and the number will increase. . . . This year several groups of "drugless healers" are trying to have

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† This column strives to mirror the work and aims of colleagues who bore the brunt of Association activities some twenty-five years ago. It is hoped that such presentation will be of interest to both old and new members.

By CHARLES B. PINKHAM, M. D.

Secretary-Treasurer

News

"With Stanford University School of Medicine on a war-time continuous schedule, virtually every other medical school in the United States will follow suit and eliminate vacations," Dean Loren R. Chandler announced today. . . . Elimination of vacation periods will stagger graduation of present classes and will permit Stanford to graduate two full classes of doctors in 1943. A total of 120 will be graduated. As President of the Association of American Medical Colleges, Dr. Chandler said he had received word that practically every other medical school will follow a similar plan. Greatest hardship will be on the self-supporting third of medical students who ordinarily earn tuition during vacations. Some method of advancing funds at low interest rates will have to be worked out, Dr. Chandler said. (San Francisco *Call-Bulletin*, Jan. 1, 1942.)

"Clarence Atwell, 31, of Lemoore, charged with practicing medicine without a license, pleaded guilty late yesterday afternoon when he was arraigned in Clovis before Justice of the Peace J. E. Burke, who sentenced him to serve thirty days in the Fresno County Jail. He also was placed on six months' probation. County Detectives Amil Demes and G. J. Mohler arrested Atwell, whom they described as the Indian doctor in the Hank Grisby cabin on Table Mountain, Tuesday night. They said he cut Mrs. Matilda Chenot, 27, of Friant, in the leg with a broken beer bottle and sucked blood from the cut in a treatment he claimed would cure the woman's illness. The officers said Atwell has been traveling throughout the San Joaquin Valley treating Indians, and claiming to cure many ailments with his bleeding operation." (Fresno *Bee*, January 1, 1942.)

"Conviction of Paul Cushing and R. L. Rankin on charges of being accessories in the operation of an illegal operation ring in Reno was upheld by the State Supreme Court." (Press dispatch dated Carson City, Nevada, Dec. 18, 1941, printed in Sacramento *Bee* same date.)

"Dr. H. I. Morehead, chiropractor, who assertedly was conducting a 'cosmic therapy' enterprise by mail from a health clinic in Norton, Kansas, was arrested today by Federal Officers on a complaint charging mail fraud. According to postal inspectors, he was taken into custody at the office of a local chiropractor, where he was receiving treatments, and is being held on \$2,500 bail for removal to Kansas. . . ." (Los Angeles *Herald and Express*, Dec. 27, 1941.)

"Dr. Carl G. Williams, Santa Monica physician, who last July caused a brief reign of terror in the vicinity of his Moreno avenue home, today was denied probation and sentenced to serve 90 days in the county jail, and to pay a fine of \$200 or serve an additional 100 days. The physician, who allegedly threatened half a dozen persons, including four police officers, with a loaded revolver,

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† The office addresses of the California State Board of Medical Examiners are printed in the roster on advertising page 6. News items are submitted by the Secretary of the Board.